REFLECTIONS

On the too prevailing Spirit of

DISSIPATION and GALLANTRY;

Shewing its dreadful Conſequences to

PUBLICK FREEDOM.

By the AUTHOR of the REVIEW of the CHARACTERS of the Principal Nations in *EUROPE*;

AND OF

An ACCOUNT of the CHARACTER and MANNERS of the FRENCH, with Occaſional Obſervations on the ENGLISH.

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Of whom may be had, The Account of the CHARACTER and MANNERS of the FRENCH, *&c.*

M. DCC. LXXI.

TO THE

READER.

IN the Account of the CHARACTER and MANNERS of the FRENCH, with occaſional Obſervations on the ENGLISH, written by the Author of this Pamphlet, and publiſhed a few Months ſince, a few Reflections were made upon the notorious and ſcandalous Infidelity prevailing in France, in the Marriage State; and the CRITICAL REVIEWERS, ſpeaking

ſpeaking of thoſe Reflections, ſay they are ſuch as "they imagine may be particularly "ſerviceable at this Period, when there ſeems, "from ſome late remarkable Adventures, to "be a Diſpoſition among ourſelves to run "into the ſame abandoned Libertiniſm, the "ſure Fore-runner of Slavery."

THE favourable Reception the Work above-mentioned has met with from the Publick, and eſpecially that Part of it, (as the Author has been informed) which treats of an Evil now become more than ever alarming to the Engliſh Nation, has induced him to conſider it more at large, and to ſubmit to the Publick, in the following Sheets, what has further occurred to him upon ſo weighty a Subject: the Experience of laſt Winter having ſhewn that DISSIPATION and GALLANTRY, ſo far from loſing Ground, were never, perhaps, known, to have made, in ſo ſhort a Space of Time,

Time, ſuch a rapid and dangerous Progreſs in this Iſland; ſuch a Progreſs, indeed, as threatens, if not timely and powerfully reſiſted, to overwhelm, in the End, the Morals of the whole Britiſh Community.

In diſcuſſing this Subject, the Author hopes he ſhall be excuſed for having unavoidably repeated, on the preſent Occaſion, a few of the Obſervations recommended by the Reviewers, from his Account of the Character and Manners of the French.

A FEW

A FEW SERIOUS

REFLECTIONS, &c.

WHEN the Character of a Nation undergoes any Change, however ſlight and immaterial, the Cauſes of it may be traced without any Difficulty to their original Source: In the ſame Manner as when the Character of Individuals ſuffers any Alteration, it is ſoon known among their Acquaintance, to what it may be aſcribed. According to this Maxim, which holds good invariably in Matters of the higheſt Importance, as well as in leſſer Concerns, the preſent alarming Progreſs of Vice and Immorality in this Country, may be eaſily

accounted for, by examining the Notions and Ways of living of thoſe among whom it prevails.

It is not many Years ſince the reſpective Paſtimes and Amuſements of the Great and the Vulgar, though ſufficiently diverſified, were ſtill circumſcribed within certain Limits, and carried with them ſome Appearance of Dignity among the former, and of Decorum among the latter. They had not yet tranſgreſſed the Bounds of decent Feſtivity; and were kept in due Order by being reſtrained to the Connections ariſing from the Ties of Family or of Friendſhip. Perſons who met together on the Score of Pleaſure, were not, as now, abſolute Strangers to each other: and that promiſcuous Mixture of all Kind of Company, which the Spirit of Diſſipation renders ſo acceptable, and ſo common, in theſe Days, was then a Thing unknown.

But as, in Proceſs of Time, an uninterrupted Series of national Peace and Felicity is apt to produce Remiſſneſs and Languor, in thoſe who ought to watch over the Public, and as it ſeldom fails to breed a Propenſity to Wantonneſs in Individuals, that Simplicity of Taſte

Taſte in our Recreations and Pleaſures, which had long characteriſed the Engliſh Nation, began to give way to an Introduction of what bore the Name of Refinement and Delicacy; and we adopted, with an Eagerneſs the more dangerous as the Conſequences were not then foreſeen, thoſe Improvements, as they were called, that were imported from abroad: not reflecting that the Miſchiefs they have conſtantly occaſioned, wherever they have obtained a Footing, would indubitably be as ſeverely felt in this Country as they had been in all others.

THUS, during the peaceable Reign of George the Firſt, and the former Half of that of his Succeſſor, Tranquillity at home, together with Peace abroad, and the moſt amazing Increaſe of national Opulence, were the Cauſes that inſenſibly relaxed the Minds of Men; and being ſuffered to take their Courſe, by thoſe who ought to have checked the Evils, which an Abuſe of them will neceſſarily effect, theſe Evils ſoon gained Ground. They, indeed, in whoſe Power, and therefore whoſe Duty it was to have reſiſted, firſt and principally encouraged and patronized, them. They advanced, therefore, by gradual Steps, and in

no long Space of Time over-flowed the whole Community.

The Conſequences reſulting from this Introduction of a Taſte for Pleaſures that are demonſtrably incompatible with the Welfare of this Country, were ſoon too viſibly apparent. A Corruption of Morals enſued that communicated itſelf from the Great, down to the loweſt Claſſes of the Vulgar, with the moſt pernicious Rapidity. It may be affirmed with the fulleſt Confidence, that in little more than Thirty Years, the whole Maſs of the People of England were infected to ſuch a Degree, that they might be ſaid to have changed, in ſome very material Reſpects, the Character and Temper of Engliſhmen. It was in this corrupt Period the Septennial Act took Place; and that a Syſtem of parliamentary Venality was eſtabliſhed throughout the Kingdom, by a Sett of Men, whoſe Names are too well known to need mentioning, and will be tranſmitted to Poſterity with more Execration than ſeems at preſent affixed to them, if ever the Conſtitution ſhould be replaced on its former Footing. When Events of ſo unpopular a Nature, ſo evidently fatal in their Tendency, ſo entirely repugnant to the united

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Cries of a whole People, are ſuffered to take place, will any Man deny them to be fully ſufficient to ſhew the Baſeneſs and Degeneracy of that very People?

Such, it ſeems, have been the Conſequences of theſe luxurious Reſearches after Modes of Pleaſure, not only unneceſſary and expenſive, and therefore hurtful, in themſelves, but even inconſiſtent with that Temper of Steadineſs and Gravity which is the Peculiarity of the Engliſh Nation. It ought, therefore, to create no Wonder, if after diveſting ourſelves of that Decorum in Externals, which is the Safeguard as well as the Outline of interior Dignity, we ſhould no longer act or appear in the ſame reſpectable Light we were wont to do.

This is a Fact, the melancholy Truth of which all enlightened, unprejudiced Obſervers unanimouſly concur in. The judicious among Foreigners, as well as among the Natives of this Country, univerſally agree, that we are become, within this Century, a very different People from what we were a Century ago. Voltaire, in his Preface to the Hiſtory of Charles the Twelfth, ſays poſitively, that the

the Engliſh of theſe Days are no more the Engliſh of Times paſt. Rouſſeau is of the ſame Opinion; and with a philoſophic Indignation, declares them unworthy the Liberty of which they make ſuch a Boaſt. Nor are thoſe celebrated Writers ſingular in their Sentiments. It is frequent here as well as abroad, to hear ſenſible Foreigners lament the ſtrange Uſe we make of our Freedom, in proſtituting it on every Occaſion that offers, and putting it up to Sale, as if it were a Property a Man had a Right to part with.

That this was by no means the Caſe before the Æras above-mentioned is undeniable: neither is it leſs obvious to any one who will be at the Trouble of an Examination, that it is entirely owing to that Perverſion of Manners which followed the Eſtabliſhment among us of thoſe faſhionable Diverſions, that began by corrupting the Morals of the Great, and by Degrees extended the Contagion to the lower Claſſes. There is, indeed, hardly any other Way of accounting for the preſent Depravity of the Nation. What renders this Method of arguing the more cogent and concluſive is that, upon the Introduction of theſe foreign Amuſements, an Increaſe of Immora-

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lity was immediately perceptible, and of courſe became the Subject of Cenſure equally from the Pulpit and the Preſs; as plainly appears by the Sermons and moral Performances that made their Appearance in thoſe Days.

WHAT Salluſt ſays of his Countrymen the Romans, is remarkably applicable to the Engliſh Nation, *remoto Metu Puniço Mores non paulatim, ut antea, ſed Torrentis modo precipitati*, when the Romans had no longer the Carthaginians to fear, their Manners did not, as before, decline gradually, but ruſhed like a Torrent into the greateſt Exceſs of Corruption. So it was preciſely in this Country. After the Power of Lewis the Fourteenth had been totally reduced by the Arms and Councils of that Confederacy of which England had been the Soul and Support, Tranquillity and Indolence took Place of that Activity and Reſtleſſneſs, which, during the Reigns of William and Ann, had kept alive the Spirit and Vigour of the Nation. Voltaire's Obſervation on the Times after the Demiſe of Lewis the Fourteenth, is very appoſite to thoſe that followed the Peace of Utrecht, *La Nature ſembla ſe repoſer*, Nature ſeemed inclinable to reſt. This Remark of Voltaire's on the Exertions of ſuperior

rior Genius that had been ſo frequent in the Reign of that Monarch, may, in a manner, be equally applied to the Ceſſation of thoſe dreadful Hoſtilities on all Sides, that had embroiled Europe for the Space of Half a Century. It ſeemed as if the Minds of Men, after having been haraſſed with ſuch a long Courſe of Fatigues, were glad to emerge to a Seaſon of Calmneſs.

HAD this Seaſon of Calmneſs been accompanied with ſome Meaſure of Vigilance over the Manners and Morals of the People, the Happineſs of England would have been compleat; but unfortunately the very Reverſe befell us. There never was a more fatal Stagnation of that Order and Police, which forms and preſerves good Habits and Diſpoſitions, in the Minds of the People, than that which was ſuffered to take place at the Period above-mentioned.

IT is not meant hereby to be inſinuated, that in former Days we were free from thoſe Vices for which at preſent we are ſo juſtly cenſured. It is only contended that we practiſe them now in a more heinous Degree.

If we turn our Attention back to the Reign of the licentious Charles the Second, we ſhall find that, notwithſtanding his perſonal Profligacy, notwithſtanding the Profligacy of thoſe whom he choſe for the Companions and Partners of his Debaucheries, we ſhall ſtill find that his Example, happily, had not that Influence which it ſo ſeldom fails to have in the Perſon of Kings. The Number of his Courtiers who imitated him was not conſiderable, when we reflect on the Temptations they lay under; and the Majority of his Subjects blamed him openly for his Conduct. But what is ſtill more agreable to a Mind duly ſeaſoned with a Veneration for Probity, we ſhall find, too, that in the midſt of ſo diſſolute a Court, ſome of thoſe whoſe Birth, Merit and Station entitled them to a nearer Approach of their Sovereign, had Honeſty and Courage enough to tell him their Diſapprobation of his Conduct. It is well known that the Earls of Southampton and Clarendon were perpetually inveighing in his Preſence, againſt the Vices and Immoralities he ſo flagrantly practiſed and encouraged; and that the Duke of Ormond had the virtuous Boldneſs to refuſe making one at a Party of Cards, on a Day that he thought too ſerious for ſuch

a Paſtime. Inſtances of ſo much Spirit, in ſuch a Reign, ought not to be forgotten at a Time when it is ſuſpected that few Perſons would be inclined to imitate it: while Candour, however, obliges one to confeſs there is no Likelihood that any Courtier will be put to a ſimilar Trial during the preſent.

AMONG other Reaſons why the People of England were not ſo depraved in their Morals in the Days of Charles the Second, this leading Cauſe may be aſſigned. They had been engaged near Thirty Years in a moſt violent Struggle for the Preſervation of their Liberties. This Struggle could not have been maintained without an immenſe Stock of Virtue in thoſe who conducted it. Even of thoſe who embraced the other Side of the Queſtion very few were actuated by Principles of Intereſt. Conſcience alone was the ruling Motive that impelled ſo many Thouſands to ſacrifice their Fortunes and Lives in the Support of the Cauſe they had reſpectively eſpouſed. Tho' both Parties failed in the End, and neither the Royaliſts nor the Republicans had been fortunate in their Deſigns, yet their Spirits remained unbroken. Cromwell, had, indeed, ſubdued them: but all his Abilities could never

never ſuppreſs their reſtleſs Endeavours to ſupplant him; and he had, to the Hour of his Death, as much to fear from the one Side as from the other.

On the Reſtoration, the Royaliſts divided into two very diſtinct Parties, the one for abſolute, the other for a limited Power in the Crown; while the Republicans, ſtill retaining their Enmity to Royalty, added a Strictneſs of Morals in the Duties of private Life, far beyond that of their Antagoniſts; who were, nevertheleſs, obliged to ſhew themſelves not remiſs in thoſe ſame Duties, whether civil or religious, in order to counterballance the Weight which the Severity of their Lives and Converſations gave their Enemies in the Minds of the Public.

In ſuch a Situation, notwithſtanding the exceſſive Gloomineſs and Auſterity, ſo induſtriouſly affected and propagated by the Puritans, wore off by Degrees, yet it left ſuch profound Traces in the Diſpoſitions of the Generality of Men, that in Spite of the Jovialneſs of Charles and his Courtiers, the Nation could never be brought to reliſh his Ways; and though his Affability rendered his

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Perſon tolerably beloved, the Maxims of his Government were never acceptable.

In the mean while, the Diverſions and Amuſements he had imported from abroad, did not much diffuſe themſelves, and were chiefly confined to his Palace. The Stage only, which had been ſhut ever ſince the Commencement of the Civil Wars, revived at his Return; and the Bulk of the People expreſſed very little Fondneſs for any of the new invented Kinds of Recreation.

The Reſult was that the Temper of the Engliſh Nation was preſerved, in a great Meaſure, untainted. The Nobility, Gentry, and common People ſtill retained, in general, their ancient Ideas; and both public and private Virtue ſhone forth upon many Emergencies. Witneſs, the obſtinate Adherence of the Parliament to their Purſuits againſt the Duke of York, afterwards James the Second. Witneſs, the inflexible Patriotiſm of the many Members who were ſo frequently cloſetted, and whoſe Integrity could not be violated by all the Allurements of Court Promiſes or Preferments. Not to paſs by the ignominious Treatment which Charles's Miſtreſſes met

met with from the Public on every Occaſion. A Circumſtance which, though inſignificant in itſelf, fully demonſtrated how ſtrongly the Contempt and Execration for Vice, however exalted, operated in the Breaſts even of the commoneſt of the People.

The Reign of Charles the Second has been particularly inſiſted on, becauſe many Perſons would inſinuate that it was a Period peculiarly marked by an univerſal Diſſolution of Manners. True it is that many of thoſe who ſtood up for the Maxims entertained at Court, being, as it were, Soldiers of Fortune, did not give themſelves much Solicitude about the Regularity of their Lives and Manners; and provided they had full Licence to paſs their Days in Mirth and Revelry, or rather to ſpeak more properly, in Debauchery and Exceſſes of all Kinds, they cared very little what Sort of Government ſubſiſted. There were many, doubtleſs, of ſuch a Diſpoſition, chiefly Men whoſe Dependance and Expectations flowed from the Court or Courtiers; and of ſuch conſiſt, at all Times and in all Countries, the major Part of thoſe who profeſs an unlimited Devotion and Obedience to Courts. But the main Body of the People was

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by no means either tinctured with ſo deplorable an Infatuation, or plunged in thoſe Vices that flouriſhed under the Protection and Countenance of thoſe in Power.

THUS it appears, that however vicious our Anceſtors may have been a Century ago, they are ſtill exceeded by their Deſcendants; and that when we ſtigmatize the Reign of Charles the Second, as an Æra of uncommon Diſſoluteneſs and Profligacy, we forget that, from the Nature of Things, it could hardly do more than lay their Foundations. Lord Bolingbroke, an expert Judge in Matters *(quæque miſſerrima vidit et quorum Pars magna fuit)* of which he ſaw the miſerable Effects and Conſequences, and wherein he was no inconſiderable Actor in his early Days, acknowledges, that our *Luxury was then but young*, far from being arrived to the Pitch he ſaw it carried long before the latter part of his Life. *Nemo repente fuit turpiſſimus*, no Man becomes at once a conſummate Villain, is an Axiom not more true reſpecting Individuals than collective Bodies of Men. The Nation, at that Period, was far from being ripe for a Deſtruction of their Morals. There was too much of ſolid, ſterling Virtue and Piety in every

every Party and Perſuaſion, to be overturned at one Blow; and in Spite of the Endeavours of Charles and his Adherents, enough of both remained effectually to reſiſt the Deſigns of an iniquitous Court, during his Reign, and to inſpire the Nation with Spirit and Vigour, ſufficient to bring about the Revolution that happily defeated the no leſs odious Projects of his Succeſſor.

HAVING, it is preſumed, proved that the Engliſh were a more upright, virtuous People at that Time than at preſent, it may poſſibly be aſked, why the Poets and other ingenious Writers of thoſe Days, are ſo unchaſte and ſo looſe in their Productions, and ſo ready, upon all Occaſions, to draw ſuch immodeſt Pictures, unleſs they well knew they were calculated for the Meridian of their Age, and were well apprized they would meet with a favourable Reception? This is eaſily anſwered. The Poets and Writers who were then moſt encouraged, were ſuch only as coincided with the Views of the Court, Dryden, Otway, Rocheſter, Etheredge, Wycherley, &c. Dryden and Otway's Dedications breathe the moſt abject Spirit of Slavery: and the whole World knows Rocheſter to have been

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the down-right Champion of Obſcenity. Theſe, and other Writers of the like Caſt, may be ſaid, on the whole, to have rather painted the Manners they and their Patrons wiſhed to introduce, than the really exiſtent Manners of their Cotemporaries.

THE only Performance of indiſputable Merit, that met with much Applauſe, at Court, was Hudibras. But even the Succeſs of that was entirely owing to the Ridicule it threw on the oppoſite Party. The Obſcurity that ſurrounded the immortal Milton, ſhews how little real Worth was attended to. None of thoſe, indeed, who aimed at any Thing more than Reputation in the Republic of Letters, confined their Pens merely to the Diſplay of their Senſe and Genius. Another Part was neceſſary to be acted: They knew it well, and ſtudied their own Intereſt too much, to deviate from the Sentiments that were triumphant among thoſe who were at the Head of Affairs.

IT muſt not, however, be diſſembled, that towards the latter End of Charles's Reign, the repeated Efforts of the venal and immoral Writers, who, through the Encouragement of the

the Court, grew ſo numerous, had, together with the concurring Aſſiſtance of the ſcandalous Lives of many among the Great, wrought an alarming Change in the Manners of the Engliſh Nation. They were much fallen from the former Strictneſs of their Morals, and Simplicity of their Ways of living; and, on the whole, the national Character was impaired. But this Degeneracy had not ſpread itſelf ſo far as to affect thoſe great Principles on which the Edifice of Religion and Morality is founded. Theſe ſtill remained unſhaken. Though Men might run great Lengths in their Deviations from the Precepts of either, their Conſciences were not ſeared againſt Admonition, and they had not yet broken down thoſe Fences which are now experimentally found of ſo little Efficacy to ſtem the Torrent of Intereſt and Ambition.

AFTER this Recapitulation of the Facts on which we are to form a Compariſon between the preſent and paſt Times, one may venture to affirm they ſeem to eſtabliſh the Opinion that we are by much inferior to our Forefathers, not only in thoſe Qualities that enable Mankind to appear with Dignity

on the great Stage of the World, but in thoſe that render private Life reſpectable. Without theſe latter, it is hardly poſſible the former ſhould attain to that Summit of Perfection which renders them truly meritorious. For though it has been advanced that private Vices may become in their Conſequences public Benefits, it would be the Height of Abſurdity to imagine that the Practice of Vice and Iniquity at Home, can be productive of virtuous Actions Abroad.

It were needleſs, perhaps, to carry our Retroſpect to remoter Periods than thoſe we have examined. But, in order to ſilence, if poſſible, the Objections of thoſe who would inculcate the Notion that we are not ſunk into the worſt State of Depravity that ever befell us, it may not be amiſs to enquire how far the Spirit of Diſſipation and Revelry prevailed in this Nation, during the Times antecedent to thoſe we have been deſcribing.

None can deny the Reign of the unfortunate Charles the Firſt, to have been totally free from every Species of Licentiouſneſs of Morals, any farther than the Infirmity of human Nature will at the beſt of Times be

tinctured with. There was in his Days too much of Buſineſs, in every civil, political and religious Department, to admit of Thoughtleſſneſs and Diſſipation. Some Attempts, indeed, were made at Novelty in Amuſements; but they were of a kind that reflected Honor on their Authors, and ſhewed their Ingenuity, much more than any Attachment to frivolous Paſtimes. Such, for example, was the celebrated Pageant, among the Contrivers and Conductors of which we find ſome of the moſt illuſtrious Names of the Age, even that of a Selden. Such was the Maſque of Comus, compoſed by Milton, to omit other Inſtances, all of which, inſtead of arguing any Proneneſs to Levity in the Times, proved, on the contrary, an exquiſite Taſte for Decorum and Propriety; and that their Patroniſers were Men who fully underſtood how to enjoy and reconcile *Otium cum Dignitate*, Leiſure and Recreation with Temperance and Dignity.

The Comedies of Ben Johnſon, written at that Æra, betray nothing of Looſeneſs and Immorality. There are none in our Language to which the ſaying is more applicable *Caſtigat ridendo*, that their Author was perfectly converſant in the Art of expoſing and

reprehending Vices and Follies with good Humour and Pleaſantry.

CHARLES himſelf, to do him Juſtice, was not only a Pattern of Decency in Behaviour, but a profeſt Diſcourager of whatever had the leaſt Tendency to Levity. It may even be ſaid that he carried his Attachment to Seriouſneſs and Gravity too far on ſome Occaſions. However, it cannot be objected to him that he was a Foe to becoming Mirth. On the contrary, his Court abounded with all thoſe Diverſions that were compatible with the Majeſty of his Station, and though an Enemy to all Exceſſes, he rather delighted in innocent Amuſements.

MEAN time, the Puritanic Party, which grew daily more numerous and formidable, was compoſed of Men whoſe Principles led them to teſtify the moſt ſcrupulous Abhorrence for all Pleaſures that bore the leaſt Colour of Danger to the Morals of Mankind. Hence they deteſted all expenſive Gaieties in their Paſtimes, and confined themſelves to the moſt plain and ſimple Relaxations, ſuch as were no more than abſolutely neceſſary for the

the Refreſhment of the Body and Mind, and could not leave the leaſt Occaſion for Repentance.

Though they were not yet the prevailing Party, ſtill their Influence was very ſtrong throughout the Nation. The continual Perſecutions they underwent, inſtead of impreſſing the Public with the leaſt Notion that they ſuffered according to their Deſerts, produced quite a contrary Effect, and led People to examine what they had done to draw upon them ſo much Severity. This Enquiry was far from proving unfavourable to them. It awakened in moſt Men a Compaſſion for their Sufferings, and a Deſire to ſee them mitigated. From Sentiments of this kind, the Tranſition was eaſy to Sentiments of Indignation againſt thoſe who puniſhed ſo unmercifully a Deviation from eſtabliſhed Modes of Worſhip far from eſſential in their Nature. All theſe Conſiderations, joined to the Purity of their Manners, inſenſibly won them a prodigious Share of Public Eſteem; and from being reſpected, they of courſe, became Models of Imitation.

THUS it appears that all things conſpired in thoſe Days to cheriſh a Reſerve and Solemnity in the Deportment of Men. The Courtiers were grave after the Example of their Sovereign; the People, though the Influence of the Puritans. This ſerious Humour prevailed in all Claſſes and Profeſſions. It ſhone principally in the Writings of the moſt eminent Scholars of that Age, and was of admirable Service in conferring Strength and Manlineſs on their Stile, as Mr. Gordon ſo judiciouſly remarks in the excellent Diſcourſes with which he prefaces his Tranſlation of Tacitus.

NEITHER ſhould we paſs by, on this occaſion, the Merit of the King himſelf who both wrote and ſpoke with an Elegance and Majeſty entirely worthy of his Character; worthy, indeed, of a better Cauſe than that he had unfortunately moſt at heart.

WE may further add that his Learning was of a much ſuperior kind to that of his Son Charles, who, however keen a Connoiſſeur of Men and Things, was more converſant in Books of Wit and Amuſement, than in Works of Utility

Utility and Inſtruction, and though no incompetent Judge of Literary Merit, was rather, upon the whole, a ſenſible and agreable Companion, than a Man of ſound Knowledge and profound Penetration.

The Auſterity of Manners that prevailed on the Diſſolution of the Monarchy, in all who poſſeſſed or aſpired at the Poſſeſſion of Power, is too well known to need inſiſting upon. What Voltaire ſo pertinently calls *la ſombre Adminiſtration de Cromwell*, the gloomy Adminiſtration of Cromwell, left no room for any Qualities to recommend themſelves, but ſuch as were either conducive to the Support of his Authority, or to the Welfare and Grandeur of the Nation. Such Qualities Prejudice itſelf muſt acknowledge he extended the moſt ready Protection to, and even exerted his utmoſt Induſtry to diſcover and render ſerviceable: as the many great and glorious Events that reflected equal Luſtre on his Government, and on the Engliſh Nation, will ever invincibly teſtify.

Nor can it be denied that this celebrated Man, in the midſt of thoſe Triumphs that ſpread the Terror of his Name over all Europe,

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was, at the ſame time, very ſolicitous to form the Manners of his Countrymen on a Plan truly conſiſtent with the Spirit and Vigour which was then the Character of Engliſhmen. His private manner of Living was ſuch as all Sovereigns might imitate. Regularity, one may well imagine, was the Baſis of a Puritanic Court. But it was not tinged with any Pedantry of State. Oliver had too much of the Soldier to attach himſelf to needleſs Formalities. The Tenor of his Life was plain and ſimple; and, excepting thoſe Occaſions wherein a Diſplay of the Greatneſs of the People whom he repreſented, was proper and neceſſary, he ſtudiouſly avoided all Pomp and Oſtentation of whatever kind. In order to diffuſe that ſerious Turn of Temper he ſo cultivated in himſelf, and ſo prized in others, he baniſhed all Sort of Effeminacy in Apparel, Paſtimes, and Deportment, from all thoſe over whom he had any Controul. Whoever approached him was obliged to conform to this Model; and it may be ſaid there was not a Sovereign in his Time, able to boaſt ſuch a manly Aſſemblage of Courtiers; moſt of them Perſons of prime Eminence in their various Stations, and every way fit to be truſted with the Execution of the nobleſt Deſigns.

In the mean Time, the martial Spirit that had been kindled by the Civil Wars, ſubſiſted in its full Force; and was viſible in all the Diverſions then in vogue. Firmneſs and Magnanimity were the Virtues of the Times, and kept at a Diſtance whatever bore the leaſt Semblance of Weakneſs or Puſillanimity. All things partook of this vigorous Diſpoſition. It inſinuated itſelf into all Companies, Converſations, and Amuſements. It preſided over all Denominations; alike over Manhood and over Youth, to infuſe into whom that equally grave and reſolute Frame of Mind on which Men then prided themſelves, his Secretary, the great Milton, compoſed his famous Treatiſe on Education.

With this Elevation of Soul, derived from an unfeigned Contempt for all that was trifling and unmanly, it was no ways ſurpriſing that the Engliſh became, as Mr. Guthrie, in his Hiſtory of England, ſtiles them at that Time, the Heroes of the World. No European Nation made then ſo brilliant a Figure. From the Shores of Holland, to the Extremities of the Mediterranean, their Fleets ſtruck univerſal Fear, and ruled with invincible Sway. Their Ambaſſadors

commanded the moſt profound Reſpect and Deference in all the Courts of Chriſtendom. While Individuals, whom their various Occaſions called Abroad, were treated every where with the utmoſt Civility and Attention.

After this Review of the Temper and Manners of the Times in England, from the Reign of Charles the Firſt, let us now ſtep back to the Reign of his Father. No Prince in our Hiſtory has met with leſs Quarter from all Hiſtorians, than James the Firſt; and certain it is that he laid himſelf open to Malice and Detraction, as if he had ſet them at Defiance, and reſolved to give himſelf no Solicitude concerning what the World might ſay about him. He does not ſeem, indeed, to have poſſeſſed much of that perſonal Fortitude of Heart which may ſometimes render a Monarch's private Character not unreſpectable, although his public one may appear very contemptible. The Conſequence was, that his Method of Living and paſſing his Time was not very praiſeworthy, and diſplayed very little of Royalty. Poſſibly, the Reſtraints he was bred under, the continual Apprehenſions he was in from

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the Turbulence of the ruling Men in Scotland, before his Acceſſion to the Crown of England, and the Habit of applying himſelf to pedantic Studies for a long Courſe of Years; all theſe Cauſes may have contributed to narrow his Faculties. Whatever the Reaſon might be, he gave but little Encouragement to any Spirit of Manlineſs, by his Example, which, on the contrary, wholly tended to work a Diminution of that noble Stock of it, which had been left him, as it were by way of Inheritance, together with her Crown, by Queen Elizabeth.

MANY were the Paſtimes and Diverſions which he patronized; induced, no doubt, by their Novelty to him, who had ſo long been uſed to a ſevere Manner of living; unacquainted with Plenty, cloſely ſtinted in every Kind of Expence, and now, on a Sudden, environed with all Sort of Abundance and Splendour.

BUT, notwithſtanding the Uſe he made of his new-acquired Fortune, was more like that of a needy Youth juſt arrived at the Poſſeſſion of a large Eſtate, than of a Prince ſucceeding to a long-expected Crown, yet the Contempt he ſoon fell under prevented

the Contagion from ſpreading. The frequent Compariſons made by his Subjects, between him and his Predeceſſor; the Meanneſſes, both in his public and private Capacity, that gave perpetual Occaſion and Scope for thoſe Compariſons, ſunk him ſo low in their Eſtimation, that whatever he ſaid, wrote, or did, was equally deſpicable in their Eyes.

The Conſequence was, that James was left to enjoy himſelf, and his Amuſements, amidſt the Circle of a few intereſted Courtiers, who buoyed him up with all that Incenſe of Flattery with which feeble Minds are ſo charmed; while the whole Nation rung with Diſcontent and Complaints of his Conduct and Maxims; and while, what was ſtill more diſhonourable, he was held in Deriſion, and his Adminiſtration reviled, in every Court Abroad.

In the mean Time, the Nation ſtill preſerved the illuſtrious Character it had ſo long ſuſtained. The World was too clear ſighted to involve the Monarch and his Subjects in the ſame Condemnation. The Inclinations and Purſuits of the Publick were the ſame as heretofore. Their Minds, Occupations, and Pleaſures, grave, ſpirited, and manly.

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So far, indeed, were their Diverſions from receiving any Influence from their Monarch, that his own Son Henry, as promiſing a young Prince as ever raiſed the Expectations of a Kingdom, could never be brought to expreſs the leaſt Reliſh or Approbation of the Objects of his Father's Amuſements. Such of the Nobility and Gentry as had no immediate Connections with the King's particular Court, were of the ſame Opinion as this gallant Youth, and addicted themſelves to thoſe Paſtimes he ſo much delighted in. Theſe were all of an active Kind, and much in the Stile of that he was employed in, when, on a French Ambaſſador's coming to take his Audience of Leave of him, he bad him tell his Maſter, Henry the Fourth, that he left the Prince of Great Britain learning to toſs the Lance.

If, under ſo feeble a Head as James the Firſt, the Engliſh Nation ſtill retained its native Diſpoſition to Manlineſs, well might it flouriſh with diſtinguiſhed Luſtre under ſo bright a Pattern as Queen Elizabeth; a Woman on whom the European Nations conferred, with infinite Juſtice, the Title of King.

SUCCEEDING to a precarious Throne, ſhe found herſelf ſurrounded by as many Enemies as ſhe had Neighbours. Theſe Enemies conſiſted of the greateſt Politicians and moſt powerful Princes in Europe. She found her own Realm exhauſted, while her Enemies attacked her, on the one Hand, with numerous Armies, and, on the other, with a Profuſion of Treaſure, exerted their utmoſt Endeavours to bribe and alienate all thoſe in whom ſhe placed her Confidence, and relied for Support. The Zeal and Fidelity of her Subjects, charmed with her Virtues and ſublime Qualities, enabled her to riſe ſuperior to all her Foes; and not only to defeat all their Schemes, but even to carry into their own Territories, thoſe Horrors and Calamities they had been aſſailed with. Thus teaching Mankind that Princes who reign in the Hearts and Affections of their People, at Home, need not be apprehenſive of Danger from Abroad.

BUT let us confine ourſelves to the perſonal Syſtem of Living, followed by Queen Elizabeth, and the Influence it had over the Engliſh. As on her Acceſſion, all Things, both in Church and State, were in the utmoſt Diſ-

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order; and as nothing but Reformation in her own domeſtic Methods of proceeding could further effectually the Work ſhe took in Hand, that of new-moulding the Religion and the Policy of the Realm, ſhe ſaw herſelf obliged to lead the Way in Perſon; and with a Magnanimity truly becoming ſo glorious and difficult an Enterprize, determined to acquire, by her own Example, the Right of inforcing the Practice of thoſe ſalutary Regulations her capacious Mind had formed for the Safety, Welfare, and Reputation of her Kingdom.

In order to create and encourage a Spirit of Temperance and Moderation in the Ways of Living, ſhe wiſely ſuppreſſed that needleſs, luxurious Plenty at Court, in a great Meaſure owing to the pernicious Generoſity and oſtentatious Magnificence of her Father. She introduced a leſs expenſive Manner of ſupporting the Majeſty of the State, which was equally removed from Sordidneſs and Profuſion; and, by uniting Oeconomy with Abundance, ſhe laid the trueſt Foundation for ſolid and permanent Splendour.

And yet, notwithſtanding the Retrenchments ſhe made, there was ſo much of Judge-

Judgement, ſo much of Caution and Forecaſt in them, that none appeared to have fallen but on Things that were abſolutely uſeleſs and unprofitable in every Light. Her Court ſtill remained magnificent and ſplendid, and ſurpaſſed in theſe Reſpects all the Courts of Chriſtendom.

In Conformity to the Pattern ſhe had ſet her Subjects, they learned to ally domeſtic Plenty with Prudence and Diſcretion: and to ſeek rather to enjoy the Sweets and Comforts of Life, than to make an idle and ſuperfluous Parade of them.

Mean while, that all Claſſes and Conditions of Men might act according to the ſame beneficial Spirit, Regulations and Ordinances were framed and ſet on Foot, in order to reſtrain all immoderate Proceedings on all thoſe Occaſions where People are apt to go beyond due Limits. Even her own Courtiers were not exempt from her ſevereſt Reprimands, whenever they exceeded what ſhe thought the Bounds of Propriety.

In the Midſt of all this Vigilance to curb Extravagance of every Denomination, no

Sovereign

Sovereign was more attentive to impreſs Foreigners with the higheſt Senſe of Reſpect for herſelf, and for the Realm ſhe governed. Whenever thoſe Emergencies occurred that neceſſarily call for a Diſplay of Grandeur, ſhe ſpared nothing to render her Perſon and her Court ſuperb and brilliant. If, indeed, ſhe may be reproached with any Exceſſes, it may be for having carried her Fondneſs for Dreſs too far, and for having entertained too partial an Opinion of her perſonal Graces.

Let us, however, draw the Veil of Oblivion over theſe unimportant Foibles, and examine her Conduct in Scenes of a more exalted and more intereſting Nature.

Had ſhe done no more than to have introduced Habits of Carefulneſs and Oeconomy among her Subjects, that alone would have been rendering them an eſſential Service, at a Time when they were particularly wanted in a Country that was beginning to launch into many Branches of Trade, and was endeavouring to make a capital Figure in that long neglected Province.

But her Mind was too penetrating, her Spirit indued with too much Activity to ſtop here. She ſaw her Enemies on the

Continent daily gathering Strength. She was aware that this Strength would be exerted againſt her. She knew that her principal Reliance would be on her People at home: and perceived that, conſidering the Circumſtances of Affairs in Europe, inſtead of receiving any Aſſiſtance from others, her own Aſſiſtance would, in all probability, be highly needed by her Wellwiſhers Abroad.

THESE were ſufficient Motives, in a Woman of her Forecaſt, to prepare for the Day of Trial, and to ſummon all thoſe Helps that were requiſite to face thoſe Dangers, with which it was happy for her that ſhe foreſaw ſhe would have to contend.

THIS it muſt be acknowledged ſhe did in a Manner befitting the Queen of a great and reſolute Nation. In order to inure equally the Minds and Bodies of Men to Fortitude and Vigour, ſhe was careful in all her Diſcourſes, to pay the higheſt Homage to Valour, and to give the greateſt Encouragement to Perſons of known Bravery. To diſſeminate a martial Temper and Emulation throughout the youthful Claſſes, the moſt unremitting Care was taken to train up in Military Exerciſes all thoſe whoſe

whoſe Stations and Duty required them to be converſant in the Uſe of Arms; and thoſe Diverſions were induſtriouſly promoted and circulated that bore the Reſemblance of War.

The Conſequences of this ſagacious Conduct were apparent in a very ſhort Time. The Nobility, the Gentry, the Common People, animated with her own Spirit, vied with each other in Feats of manly Proweſs: and both Town and Country were filled with Men of equal Strength, Courage, and Skill, in whatever related to the Field.

Let it not be ſaid that ſuch a Turn of Mind is apt to render Men rude and ferocious, and to take them off from more profitable Employments: that it is only in a Military State that ſuch a Syſtem is admiſſible, and that it tends to deſtroy that Sedateneſs of Temper that is neceſſary for carrying on of Commerce and Manufactures.

Experience has ſhewn that not one of theſe Aſſertions is founded in Fact. The Experience of thoſe very Times has ſhewn the Reverſe to be true. So far from being

rude and ferocious, Queen Elizabeth's Courtiers were the moſt ſhining Ornaments of the Realm. An Eſſex, a Sydney, a Raleigh, were Names in whom Politeneſs, Learning, and Heroiſm were blended with equal Luſtre. The People were ſo far from being unprofitably employed, that it is preciſely from that Period we are to date the Commencement of every Improvement in every Branch of Trade and every uſeful Art.

The Truth is, that Elizabeth knew how to reconcile all theſe various Purſuits, and to render them ſubſervient to the Grandeur and Felicity of her People. This was the great and ſole Art of Government by which ſhe became ſo univerſally reſpected. This is the only Art by which the judicious Part of Mankind pronounce on the Worth or Demerit of their Rulers. And this, in ſhort, is that Royal, neceſſary Art, which whoever poſſeſſes not, is unfit to wear a Crown.

While the Proſperity of the Nation was thus wiſely conſulted and ſolidly eſtabliſhed at Home, its Glory and Reputation were not leſs conſpicuous Abroad. Thus formed and prepared by manly Habits and Occupations,

tions, in their own Country, the Engliſh, when called into Foreign Parts, appeared to an Advantage that ſignally diſtinguiſhed them from all who acted with them in the ever memorable Scenes that marked thoſe troubleſome Times. The famous Prince Maurice acknowledged them to be the Flower of his Army. The no leſs celebrated Prince of Parma, Alexander Farneſe, called them his moſt dangerous Enemies; and the Great Henry the Fourth of France ſtiled them the Companions of his Victories.

No Men could better deſerve theſe illuſtrious Teſtimonies. It was not only in the Proofs they gave of Intrepidity that they rendered themſelves remarkable. Their Diſcipline was no leſs admired; and chiefly the ſpeedy Facility with which the new Levies that came from England attained the Knowledge and Skill of the oldeſt Veterans. This was entirely owing to the Practice of thoſe Military Feats, at Home, that have already been mentioned, and which were, in a Manner, become their moſt uſual and moſt favourite Paſtimes.

To ſuch a Degree of Expertneſs were the generality of People arrived, and the Fact was,

was, at the ſame Time, ſo well known, that the Miniſtry of England, fully acquainted with the Strength and Power of the Nation, neither betrayed nor felt any Timouroufneſs on the Approach of the Spaniſh Armada. The People themſelves were ſo well apprized of their own Capacity to face an Enemy, that ſo far from being in the leaſt intimidated on this critical Occaſion, they ſhewed no other Concern than what the braveſt Men will naturally feel when they are preparing for Battle, and reflect on the Chances of War. Inſomuch that what Monteſquieu ſays of the Romans, while the Commonwealth ſubſiſted, might, without much ſtraining the Point, have been applied to the Engliſh under Queen Elizabeth, that they were of ſo warlike a Diſpoſition, that the Forces, however freſh-raiſed among them, formed themſelves inſtantly to Diſcipline, and were not afraid to encounter any Enemy.

When we compare this Undauntedneſs of our Anceſtors, with the Apprehenſions that were ſo viſible in the Countenances and Diſcourſes of all Individuals promiſcuouſly, on a recent ſimilar Occaſion, it cannot fail

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to excite the utmoſt Indignation in the Boſom of all true Patriots, that no adequate Means have yet been adopted to prevent ſo univerſal a Deſpondency from having any juſt Grounds on a future Emergency. It is vain to pretend that proper Precautions have been taken. This would be true, indeed, were the eſtabliſhed Plan duly fulfilled. But the whole Nation is convinced of the contrary. The fruitleſs Military Parades that recur once a Year in the different Counties, ſerve only to remind us of what really ought to be done; and whoever looks on them as any Thing more than mere Farces, as they are at preſent conducted, *Animum pictura paſcit inani*, feeds his Mind with an empty Picture, and takes the Shadow inſtead of the Subſtance.

But what highly merits our Attention, and will undoubtedly afford particular Satisfaction to ſuch as delight in that exterior Glare which is ſo conſpicuouſly the Taſte of the preſent Times in England, this Manlineſs and Magnanimity of Character were ſo far from intefering with the leſs rugged Purſuits of genteel Life, that it may be fairly ſaid that at no Time ſince, the real

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Art and Enjoyment of it were better and more fully underſtood and practiſed.

With regard to that Department of Elegance which renders domeſtic Life agreeable and ſplendid, the Engliſh were in that Age, the Models of all Europe, ſcarce any Nation excepted. The only one that could enter into Competition with them, in thoſe Days, was the Italian, which had long before been the Country where the Arts of Civiliſation and polite Living were chiefly cultivated. But at this Period England vied with Italy itſelf in theſe Reſpects. This Aſſertion may appear bold and hazardous, but is nevertheleſs, ſtrictly true, and confirmed even by the Teſtimony of an Italian Cotemporary Writer; one, who was no leſs a Perſon than an Ambaſſador from the Republick of Venice to the Court of England: a Man who, it ſhould ſeem, from the Purport of his Errand hither, muſt have had Acceſs to the beſt and moſt authentick Information that could be procured. *Nulla toto orbe Gens eſt*, ſays he, *quæ Anglos exſuperet Splendore domeſtico*, there is no Nation on Earth that exceeds the Engliſh in domeſtic Splendour.

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THIS domeſtic Splendour was not confined to a few Grandees, it was happily very much diffuſed. Foreigners who viſited England at that Period, expatiate upon it in a Manner that ſhews how pleaſingly they were ſtruck with it; and at the ſame Time how different the Scene was to what they had been uſed to behold elſewhere.

BUT what added to this Splendour, and inhanced the Merit of thoſe who poſſeſſed it, was the Taſte that accompanied it, and the laudable Turn of Mind of the People of Faſhion, in thoſe Days, to uſe their Affluence in ſuch a Manner as might redound to publick Utility. It was common among ſuch as could afford it, to hold, at ſtated Times, a Kind of open Court for all Comers, to diſplay their Talents and Abilities in Arms and Horſemanſhip. We read even of an Archbiſhop of Canterbury who kept a great Number of Horſes trained for the Purpoſes of War, and even entertained many young Gentlemen in his Houſehold, who were carefully inſtructed in all the military Sciences. This illuſtrious Prelate was a particular Favourite of Queen Elizabeth, and thought, no doubt, he could not pay his Court more

effectually to ſo excellent a Miſtreſs, than by imitating her in what he knew was ever uppermoſt in her Mind, the promoting of whatever could prove conducive to the Glory and Service of the Kingdom.

ANOTHER Object equally deſerving our Attention, was the flouriſhing Condition of Literature and the polite Arts. They were held in the higheſt Eſtimation, and cultivated by all Ranks, without Exception, as far as their other Avocations would permit. This Circumſtance claims a more particular Conſideration, becauſe there are ſome who think Strictneſs of Virtue and Morality often liable to ſuffer from a Communication with the Muſes. But they who reaſon in this Manner forget that it is not they who corrupt us, but we who corrupt them: and that, upon a due Examination, the greateſt and beſt of Men have been indebted for the Heroiſm of thoſe Motives that rendered their Actions great and laudable, to the happy Attachment they have profeſt for intellectual Purſuits.

BUT that Particular which ought to be weighed above all the reſt, is that the gayeſt,

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as well as the moſt polite and delightful of all genteel Paſtimes, may be ſaid to have abſolutely commenced in this Aera of Manlineſs and Gravity. This was the Stage; which roſe under Shakeſpear's Hands to a Height of Dignity it has never ſince ſurpaſſed. Of all Diverſions, none was received with more Approbation and Applauſe, none followed with more Appetite and Ardour. But the real Reaſon was not merely becauſe they were Dramatick Entertainments, but becauſe they were calculated to pleaſe the Taſte of a judicious thinking People, and were generally fraught with an active Kind of Inſtruction.

Thus it muſt appear that the Age of Queen Elizabeth was not only virtuous and manly, but, at the ſame Time, no leſs polite, ſplendid, and even gay. The Combination of all theſe has been pointed out, to obviate the abſurd Notions of ſome, who ſeem to imagine that the Virtue of our Forefathers was rather an Aſperity of Manners, owing, in a great Degree, to the Want of polite Improvements.

THIS truly abſurd Notion has taken its Riſe in the Minds of thoſe who are not able to account for the Profligacy of the preſent Times, any otherways than by imputing it to thoſe Refinements that are every Day taking Place in every Branch wherein Elegance is chiefly to dictate and preſide. They poſſibly conclude that the Attention, by being long confined to Objects unneceſſary in their Nature, and of no ſerious Tendency, contracts a Sort of Levity that lays it more open to the Attacks of Effeminacy.

WHERE Attention is fixed upon Objects merely pleaſurable, and employs an immoderate Length of Time in that Manner, then, indeed, it ſoon becomes enervated and debaſed. This is preciſely the Caſe of the preſent Age; where a Round of mere Amuſements ſeems the capital Bent and Purſuit of the Generality of thoſe who figure in what is ſtiled High-life. But while Attention does not turn Amuſements into Buſineſs, while it is chiefly occupied in what really can claim the Title of Improvements, whether they are intellectual or manual, whether they are abſo-

abſolutely neceſſary, or only uſeful and convenient, or even ſimply ornamental; while they contribute to the mutual Support and Cement of Society, and to increaſe the innocent Comforts of Life, it is ſurely unreaſonable to accuſe them of effeminating and corrupting the Manners of Mankind.

We are not, therefore, to ſeek in the Refinements of Arts, for the Source of our preſent Corruption in Morals. We are to ſeek for it in thoſe endleſs Refinements in the Modes of Pleaſure, that ingroſs the Attention of the Times in a moſt ſcandalous and fatal Degree. Both High and Low are equally engaged by them. The High, in dedicating all their Time to the Enjoyment of them; the Low, in expreſſing their Regret at the Inability they find themſelves under to partake of them, and the Envy of thoſe whom Fortune has qualified to live in this riotous Manner.

Were the Loſs of Time they Occaſion, or even the Expences they draw after them, their worſt Conſequences, though, even in theſe Reſpects, they would be ſufficiently pernicious, we might ſtill allow them ſome Tolera-

Toleration. But, when we reflect that the Methods of Diverſion lately deviſed are of the moſt baneful Tendency; that they not only incourage Idleneſs and Diſſipation in its fulleſt Extremes, but, what is incomparably more heinous, open a Door to the Practice of the moſt infamous and criminal Licentiouſneſs, it is high Time they ſhould meet with the Animadverſions of thoſe, in whoſe Power it is to controul and give a Check to, whatever can be proved of the moſt miſchievious Conſequence to the Nation, as well in a publick as in a private Light.

THAT theſe Modes of Diſſipation can too readily be demonſtrated no leſs injurious to the Freedom, than to the Morals of the People, will evidently appear, if we caſt an Eye on the deplorable Effects they have univerſally produced in all thoſe Countries where they have been admitted and countenanced.

WITHOUT entering into any diffuſe Detail, let us examine what has happened in thoſe Nations that excite our more immediate Notice, and are principally viſited and frequented

quented by our Countrymen, Italy and France.

In Italy, where theſe pernicious Diverſions were firſt invented, the Date of their Birth was cloſely followed by a general Corruption of Manners. This Corruption began by poiſoning the Source of domeſtic Felicity, and deſtroying all thoſe Motives that render Home a Scene of the trueſt Pleaſures. The Ties of Love were looſened and gave way to the Infamies of Luſt and Proſtitution. The Names of Huſband and Wife became mere Words of Form; and the moſt profligate and criminal Connexions grew not only common, but, in a Manner, authorized through the Force of Example, and the univerſal Prevalence of a Species of Iniquity that is a peculiar Scandal to that Country.

Such were the Conſequences of theſe baneful Refinements of Pleaſure in private Life: while in Public Affairs, by relaxing the Manlineſs of Temper and Diſpoſition that is neceſſary for the conceiving and carrying on of great Deſigns, the Grandeur of the State mouldered away, through the

Diſſipated-

Diſſipatedneſs and Effeminacy of Individuals. Hence, during the Space of near Two Centuries, that once flouriſhing Country has been viſibly on the decline. Their formerly celebrated Republicks have now loſt almoſt all their Importance. The better Half of the Country is ſubjected to Foreigners, and the far greater Part of the Inhabitants are ſunk into the moſt contemptible Indolence.

THE French, though ſtill, in many Inſtances, a great and reſpectable Nation, have too nearly copied the Italians in their Fondneſs for theſe ruinous Paſtimes; and, like them, retain but little of that Virtue which is the chief Ingredient in the Happineſs of Life.

THIS Virtue is conjugal Fidelity, which always flouriſhes or decays in Proportion as the Spirit of Revelry and Diſſipation, originating from theſe dangerous Amuſements, prevails or is ſuppreſſed in any Country.

THAT ſuch a Spirit is derived from them is ſufficiently obvious, and, indeed, too univerſally allowed and complained of, to require any further Proof.

THOUGH

THOUGH the Conſequences flowing from ſuch a Diſpoſition may have been made light of, and treated rather ludicrouſly than ſeriouſly, by thoſe thoughtleſs, ſuperficial People; yet, to thoſe who view them attentively and judiciouſly, they will appear manifeſtly to deſerve being numbered amongſt the moſt enormous Evils, as they exert a moſt fatal Influence over the public Welfare, as well as over private Happineſs. This is a Poſition that will be forcibly and compleatly illucidated by conſidering the actual State of Matrimony in France; and by examining, at the ſame time, how far the Spirit and Practice of what is called Gallantry, is compatible with the Spirit and Exiſtence of Liberty.

AMONG the Great, in France, it is hardly poſſible to diſtinguiſh whoſe nuptial Partner, a Man or a Woman is, by any other Mark than that of Appellation. Among the leſs important Claſſes, the ſame Humour prevails, as far as their Circumſtances will admit of an Imitation of the Great.

THE French Ladies are Strangers to Reſtraints of any Sort, and enjoy the moſt un-

bounded Freedom; an Aſſertion not in the leaſt exaggerated. Their Huſbands never think of thwarting their Inclinations, and allow them the fulleſt Permiſſion to ſhape their Courſe in all Affairs as they judge proper.

In conſequence of this Unreſtraint, the Women addict themſelves to the Purſuit of their Pleaſures, without Interruption or Fear; and ſeem to feel but little Solicitude about the World's Opinion of their Proceedings. Huſbands are too civil to make much, if any Enquiry at all, concerning them; and, indeed, as they deny no Kind of Licence to their Wives, they debar themſelves from none in their Turn.

Hence it is thatFrance is a Country where Gallantry is in the higheſt Vogue, and bears a leſs odious Aſpect than it does in moſt other Parts; though, ſurely, nothing can be more ſcandalous, in the Eye of Decency, than a Syſtem of Infamy, thus methodized, as it were, and publickly carried on and allowed of on both Sides, by a tacit Kind of Agreement.

FROM this ignominious Cauſe proceed thoſe reciprocally voluntary Separations of Family, Society, and almoſt Acquaintance, under the ſame Roof; each poſſeſſing the abſolute, and ſole Property of different Apartment, different Servants, different Equipages; in ſhort, different every Thing. Hence, alſo, what is much worſe, that frequent Indifference of the Men, for what they have often ſo little Reaſon to eſteem their genuine Progeny.

IT is no ſmall Happineſs, that notwithſtanding the Force of Cuſtom and Example, amidſt the abſurd, ſervile, and pernicious Imitation of foreign Modes and Manners, that execrable one of Infidelity in the Marriage State has not yet been imported into England, in any very alarming Degree; that it is ſtill confined to a ſcanty Number among us; and that theſe, luckily for the Public, are ſingled out, on that Account, as Objects of Abhorrence and Contempt, however exalted their Station.

WHETHER the good Senſe, for which this Nation is ſo remarkably renowned, or whether the free Form of our Govern-

ment has hitherto proved moſt effectual in preventing it, is hard to tell. They both undoubtedly have: But probably more the latter Cauſe; as it is worthy of Obſervation that this avowed reciprocal Indifference in the connubial Parties, is a Monſter that has ſeldom been known to exiſt in a republican State.

AMONG the Greeks and Romans, Love was always ſuppoſed to precede and accompany Marriage. This is meant of the virtuous and flouriſhing Times of thoſe celebrated Nations. Among the Romans, eſpecially, matrimonial Affection ſubſiſted ſo long, and in ſuch Repute, that nothing is better known than that we find but one ſingle Inſtance of a Divorce among them for the Space of Five Hundred Years.

LET no Man cite the Examples of Venice and Genoa, where that moſt infamous Practice prevails of Huſbands conſenting, as it were, openly to the almoſt legal Proſtitution of their Wives. Neither Venice nor Genoa are ſtrictly Republics, though they aſſume the Name. They are the worſt of Ariſtocracies; where a ſet of hereditary Tyrants lord it over

over a ſpiritleſs Multitude; and by a Series of equally barbarous and deſpicable Politics, have ingroſſed every Department of the Adminiſtration, to the Excluſion of all other Individuals, however conſpicuous their Worth, or however ſerviceable their Abilities might prove to the Public.

Let us turn to Governments that merit the Denomination of Commonwealths, thoſe of Holland and Swiſſerland, for Inſtance; Countries which, though far from being the Favorites of Nature, are through the Induſtry and Virtues of the Inhabitants, the Seats of as much true Happineſs as any Nations ever enjoyed in the moſt delightful Situations that Climate or Soil can afford. Here we ſhall find the Ties of mutual Affection triumphant, and Infidelity between the Sexes held in its proper and merited Abhorrence. Here, in conſequence of this ſalutary Deteſtation, the Genius of domeſtic Felicity preſides in all its Glory; and, if ſuch a Phraſe may be allowed, holds up a Mirror of Conviction to Mankind, that ſhews how much more it contributes to real Comforts and Pleaſures, than all thoſe empty Devices to render Life a mere Parade,

which

which are the Boaſt and Glory of leſs fortunate, though more magnificent Nations.

THE Reaſon why virtuous Love has a more diffuſive Exiſtence in States that are free, than in ſuch as are inſlaved, is that more Virtue is requiſite in the Eſtabliſhment, Cementing, and Preſervation of the former; whereas in the latter, Force alone is the fundamental and ruling Principle.

HENCE, as good Qualities go generally together, and are naturally productive of each other, a free Government will be more fertile in worthy Characters than a deſpotic One; where Obedience to the Sovereign being conſidered as the ſupreme Standard of perſonal Deſert, and every other Inſtance of Merit holding but a ſecondary Rank, it will too readily follow that from being implicitly obeyed, he will be implicitly copied.

THUS, when a Monarch, or which is the ſame, when the Rulers in ſuch a Conſtitution addict themſelves to a Courſe of licentious Living, as it uſually happens where Men have no Bars either of Shame or legal Reſtraint

ſtraint in their Way, their vicious Examples excite a much more general Imitation throughout the ſlaviſh Multitude, than the evil Precedents of Individuals can occaſion in a Common-Wealth; where, happily, none are of Importance enough to influence the Manners of a whole People, while theſe retain that neceſſary Spirit of Watchfulneſs and Jealouſy of their principal Fellow Citizens, which diſdains to look upon them in any other Light than of that perfect Equality which ought ſo carefully to be maintained, in every eſſential Reſpect, between all the Members of a free State.

From theſe Premiſes it is apparent how little Footing Gallantry is likely to obtain in in any Country, while the Spirit of Freedom reigns there in its full Force, inſpiring Men with that Independency of thinking and acting, which prompts every one to judge of, and imitate Actions, without reſpect of Perſons.

But what claims our Attention ſtill more, it is no leſs clear, from the ſame Reaſons, that whenever Gallantry happens to gain Ground,

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it proves that Spirit to be on the Wane, and that a Way is paving for a gradual Diminution of that manly, ſerious Diſpoſition on which the Spirit of Liberty principally depends; as the extinction of ſuch a Diſpoſition opens immediately a Paſſage to all thoſe Vices, that by effeminating the Manners of a People, ſo ſeldom fail to terminate in the Deſtruction of all thoſe Virtues and Qualities that conſtituted their former Grandeur.

How eſpecially, therefore, it behoveth us, who are ſo juſtly jealous of whatever may affect the Liberties of our Country, to feel and expreſs the moſt violent Alarm and Indignation upon the leaſt Appearance of any Attempt to introduce among us ſo deteſtable a Vice; a Vice that tends ſo ſtrikingly, ſo directly, to effect the Deſtruction of thoſe Virtues and Qualities that ſo neceſſarily conduce to maintain and ſupport that Character of a free People we are ſo reaſonably proud of.

THAT the preſent modiſh Paſtimes have been the principal means of introducing and abetting this dreadful Vice of Gallantry, is plain from the inceſſant Murmurs they excite among

among all thoſe who feel themſelves intereſted in the Preſervation of the good Name of ſuch as frequent them.

NEITHER is it leſs certain that the Ruin of Matrimonial Happineſs (the natural Reſult of Gallantry) which alone is a deplorable Infamy in private Life, is, at the ſame time, a moſt enormous Evil in its Conſequences to the Publick.

CONJUGAL Attachment is a Virtue the more to be prized, as it is uſually the Foundation of the moſt perſevering, invincible Courage and Manlineſs, Qualities that have never forſaken a People that was noted for the other. An illuſtrious Proof of this may be adduced from the Behaviour of the Carthaginians; a Nation no leſs renowned for the warm Affection they bore to their Wives and Families, than for that Intrepidity which was evidently the Reſult of it on ſo many remarkable Occaſions. Their heroic Fortitude in the latter Scenes of their agonizing Country, was inconteſtably due to that particular Motive: the prodigious Exertions of Valour proceeding from which, have

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ſignally eterniſed the Memory of their Ruin, and rendered it leſs a matter of Triumph to thoſe who effected it, than glorious to themſelves in the Eyes of impartial Poſterity.

FAR different was the Fall of thoſe Rivals whoſe Aggrandiſement was ſo conſpicuouſly owing to their Deſtruction. After having, for the Courſe of Ages, enjoyed a Freedom and Reputation ariſing manifeſtly, in a great Meaſure, from the Prevalence among them of the conjugal Virtues, they gradually degenerated to the moſt ſcandalous Extremes in the oppoſite Vice; which, by diveſting them of that Reſpect for the Community ſo ſtrongly connected with and ſo powerfully inforced by the juſt and reaſonable Influence of domeſtic Regards, introduced a general Corruption of Manners, and accelerated the final Diſſolution of that conſtitutional Liberty which, as it was founded on the private Excellence of Character in Individuals, could no longer ſubſiſt when deprived of that neceſſary Support.

THUS the Virtues and the Vices of the married State are equally of the moſt immediate

mediate Conſequence to the Public, whoſe Happineſs or Miſery is ſo cloſely and undeniably allied with that of its conſtituent Members. Neither is it leſs clear that Felicity in this beſt, or worſt Situation of Life, depends moſt materially on the Form of Government we live under: As from the greater or leſs Degree of Aſcendancy we are liable to, will be derived the more extenſive or reſtricted Conformity to thoſe flagitious Models to which Experience teaches that human Nature is ſo contagiouſly addicted.

Good Senſe alone is not a ſufficient Barrier to ſtop the Incurſion of pernicious Examples. The Spirit of the Conſtitution muſt alſo interfere. There is Senſe enough in France, in Italy, and elſewhere, to tell them how contemptible and infamous the Practices are of which they are ſo notoriouſly, and what is much worſe, ſo ſhameleſſly guilty. But the Grandees in thoſe Countries (who are commonly plunged in every kind of Luxury and Effeminacy) are Beings of too great a Magnitude not to be ſet up as the Standards of all Propriety, and copied with the moſt deſpicable Servility. Hence, as the Cuſtoms

of the Court and its Dependants are conſidered as the completeſt Patterns, the nearer to which Men approach, the higher they raiſe themſelves above the Commonalty, this Portion of the Community being held, in ſuch Parts, in the moſt abſurd Contempt, every one endeavours to eſtrange himſelf from it by all poſſible Methods. Now Senſuality and Diſſipation being the moſt eaſy and inviting, as well as the readieſt way of reſembling the Great, all who have it in their Power indulge in the ſame Liberties; but principally abandon themſelves to that Debauchery of the Mind which ſo peculiarly characteriſes rhe higheſt Claſſes.

This Debauchery of the Mind is the infallible Poiſon that radically deſtroys all Senſe of Honeſty and Magnanimity, as it comprehends thoſe Vices that flow from a criminal Addiction to Pleaſure, joined to a ſettled Determination to proſtitute every Talent for the Sake of enjoying modiſh Gratifications.

The Perverſion of Mankind is by nothing ſooner brought about than by a thoughtleſs Conformity to what is denominated the Way

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of the World; which, by occaſioning a Relaxation of the Principles inſtilled by Education, urges us by Degrees, to a total Deſertion of all Rules, excepting thoſe of Vogue and Faſhion; and to deem nothing good or bad but as it coincides with, or deviates from the Conduct of thoſe whom our Puſillanimity qualifies with the Title of our Betters.

THUS while connubial Affection is unfaſhionable among the Great, it quickly becomes the Slight and Jeſt of the inferior Claſſes in thoſe ſlaviſh Countries; and thus Individuals, from loſing the Habit of domeſtic Attachments, fall imperceptibly into an Indifference for every kind of indearing Connection. For when once the Ties of Love are looſened, thoſe of Friendſhip are ſoon apt to give way: It being a Truth exemplified by too many Precedents to ſuffer any Doubt, that Inconſtancy in the firſt is ſeldom accompanied by Sincerity in the laſt.

HENCE a Liſtleſſneſs and Unconcern ſo commonly prevail for what is moſt deſerving of Predilection and Eſteem and hence thoſe Objects that ought from their Nature to

afford the moſt rational Delight, the Pleaſures of Home, are diſcarded to make Room for Paſtimes that contribute much more to diſſipate and confuſe the Mind, than to give it Eaſe and Recreation.

BUT in this Enquiry into the many fatal Conſequences flowing from that Spirit of Intrigue and Diſſipation, ſo prevalent among the upper Claſſes abroad, what chiefly concerns an Engliſhman to reflect upon, with the moſt ſerious Attention, is that Corruption of Mind, reſulting from thoſe equally criminal and effeminate Occupations: which ſeldom fail to generate a Licentiouſneſs of Manners, the woeful Effects of which extend themſelves equally to Matters of the moſt public and reſpectable Importance, as to thoſe of the moſt private Nature.

WHATEVER Power the Stings of Conſcience may retain; when once Men have given themſelves up to a profligate Courſe of Living, though they may often be troubled with Remorſe, they rarely think of Repentance, till frightened into it by the Terrors of an approaching Diſſolution.

THUS

THUS, when they have inured themſelves to the fatal Habit of ſacrificing to the Gratification of Paſſion, every moral and religious Motive that ought to have reſtrained them, they acquire inſenſibly that Hardneſs of Heart which ſteels a Man againſt paying any Reſpect to thoſe Maxims, either human or divine, that ſtand in the way of his Deſires, and by having long accuſtomed themſelves to run the moſt guilty Lengths, for the Sake of Pleaſure, they next learn to refrain from nothing that will ſerve their Intereſt or their Ambition. Thus they at laſt arrive at that conſummate Pitch of Depravity which eclipſes, in their Ideas, all other Views and Proſpects but ſuch as relate to their own Wiſhes; extinguiſhes, all Feeling but for themſelves; and fits them, in ſhort, for a total Reſignation of all their Faculties to the Uſe and Command of thoſe on whom their Expectations depend, however flagitious the Taſks may prove to which they are not ignorant their Talents will be applied.

HENCE uſually proceeds among the Grandees of ſo many Countries, that ſelfiſh, unlimited Subſerviency to Power which becomes the

the principal Baſis of their Activity on all Emergencies public and private, and induces them to exert it in the meaneſt Endeavours to pleaſe tyrannic Superiors, by every Species of Adulation and baſe Compliance with their capricious Injunctions, in order to preſerve that footing of Regard and Notice from them, which, in abſolute Governments, is indiſpenſably neceſſary to confer on Individuals an Air of Importance and Diſtinction.

We are not, therefore, to be ſupriſed if Patriotiſm (that comprehenſive Benevolence which includes in our own, the Welfare of every Member of the Community) ſhould ſo rarely be found in a State immerſed in that Degeneracy of Sentiments which excludes, and in a manner, annihilates the natural Efficacy of even the moſt potent and coercive Ties; for how is it poſſible that a Man who feels not for all that is neareſt to him, for all that renders private Life deſireable, ſhould cheriſh any Concern for the Publick?

As Governments that are free, afford, for the Reaſons above aſſigned, much more numerous Inſtances of matrimonial Honour and Happineſs than others, they are, in conſequence, much more fertile in Patriots; the greateſt of whom have been produced in Countries bleſt with Liberty, and ever been conſpicuouſly remarkable, at the ſame Time, for the conjugal Virtues, which are uſually the Forerunners or the Concomitants of all others.

SOCRATES, the Patriot of Mankind, rather than of Greece, was a moſt excellent Huſband. The laſt Brutus, Aſſociate of Caſſius in aſſerting the Roman Cauſe, was a pattern of nuptial Tenderneſs.

SUCH were, in modern Times, that heroic Champion of Swiſſerland, the celebrated William Tell: The great Barnevelt in Holland: And in France, the laſt Aſſertor of French Liberty againſt the Uſurpations of the Court, during the Minority of Lewis the Fourteenth, the illuſtrious Brouſſel, whom Voltaire undervalues with ſo much Injuſtice and Impropriety.

SUCH was in our Country, that Mirror of Honeſty and Diſintereſtedneſs, as well as of the moſt ſplendid Abilities, the truly noble Sir William Temple, who retained his Integrity in the midſt of a Court that was, in its Time, the Center of Diſſoluteneſs and Profligacy, that of our Charles the Second, a Prince more abandoned to Voluptuouſneſs than even his Cotemporary of France the aforementioned Lewis; and who ſtrove no leſs to follow his Foot-ſteps in the Eſtabliſhment of Deſpotiſm in this Kingdom.

FROM the foregoing Obſervations it ſeems incontrovertible that the Spirit of Liberty and that of Gallantry, are things of ſo oppoſite a nature as to prove utterly incompatible; that it is morally impoſſible they ſhould ever exiſt, at the ſame time, in any Country; and that the more Libertiniſm in the Marriage State gains ground in a free Nation, the nearer that Nation approaches to the Downfall of its Liberty.

THESE are Reflections that whoever aſpires at the Title of Patriot, ought to bear deeply engraven on his Mind; and which ought, therefore

therefore, ever to be uppermoſt in the Thoughts of an Engliſhman who feels any Warmth for the Proſperity of his Country.

It is no leſs equally evident that the only effectual means to preſerve the Spirit of Liberty, is to cheriſh a manly ſerious Temper. This Temper alone is its real, ſolid Foundation; and without it none of thoſe eminent Virtues can ſubſiſt whereon the Greatneſs of the Public relies for a laſting Support.

It follows, from the ſame Arguments, that in order to ſecure the Preſervation of this Manlineſs of Diſpoſition, the moſt unfeigned, unremitting Vigilance is requiſite over the various Paſtimes that employ the Leiſure of a People: that none be permitted but ſuch as are manifeſtly of an innocent Kind, thoroughly conſiſtent with Purity of Morals, and abſolutely harmleſs in their Conſequences, as well in regard to the public Intereſt as to private Welfare: that timely Care be taken to reſtrain all dangerous Novelties in the Modes of Pleaſure; and to baniſh, with the ſtricteſt Severity, all thoſe Diverſions which lead Men into Habits of Effeminacy, the ſure and infallible

Introductors of that Spirit of Diſſipation and Intrigue, which is ſo mortal and inveterate a Foe to the Spirit of Liberty, and which it is, therefore, ſo eſſentially incumbent on us to combat with the moſt indefatigable Zeal.

A compleat and avowed Skill in the Contrivance of Amuſements, is a ſtriking and woeful Proof of the Degeneracy of a People; ſuch a Skill being held of no account in a great and flouriſhing State, too occupied in Matters of Importance, to beſtow its Attention on Matters of no Moment.

This is a Truth, of which we may be eaſily and fully convinced, by recurring to the different Periods of Liberty and Slavery that have befallen ſo many Nations. We ſhall invariably find that, ſo long as Liberty exiſted, the Addiction to Pleaſures was moderate: but that, as ſoon as Slavery was eſtabliſhed, a Paſſion for Amuſements became the reigning Taſte of both high and low.

The Athenians, at that Period when they won the Battles of Marathon and Salamis, and were confeſſedly the moſt conſpicuous of all the

the Grecian Republicks, had made but ſmall Improvements in the dangerous Art of refining Pleaſures; though otherways ſufficiently converſant in elegant and manly Paſtimes. But after they had turned their chief Application to them, and had made Athens the Scene of a perpetual round of Amuſements, they no longer remained that formidable People they once had been, and in a ſhort ſpace of time, with the loſs of their Manlineſs of Temper and Manners, they not only forfeited this Supremacy over their Neighbours, but, together with their former Grandeur and Reputation, they loſt their very Liberty and Independancy as a People, and were reduced to the moſt abject Condition of Servitude we read of in Hiſtory.

The State of the Romans was preciſely ſimilar. Till the Introduction of thoſe Aſiatic Modes of Gaiety and Pleaſure, which their Hiſtorians ſo bitterly complain of, and unanimouſly repreſent as the prime Cauſe of their Corruption and Ruin, we find they were content with Relaxations of a ſimple kind; eaſily procured; of no exceſſive Coſt; and yet, many of them, far from devoid of Elegance.

But,

But, when theſe foreign Luxuries had been once imported, they ſoon put an end to that Simplicity and Gravity of Diſpoſition for which they had been ſo long renowned; and were followed by a Perverſion of Morals that ſpeedily infected the whole Common Wealth, and threw their Liberties into the hands of all who could purchaſe them, or had Daringneſs enough to invade them.

Such muſt inevitably be our Fate, if we delay the Remedy of thoſe Evils that threaten us more than the generality of Men ſeem, by their Conduct, inclined to believe.

The Spirit of Intemperance and Riot begins to prevail in a Degree that will certainly prove as deſtructive to our Conſtitution, as it proved to that of every other free State where it has been tolerated. Nothing is more trite than the Axiom that like Cauſes will produce like Effects; but nothing is leſs trite than the Alarm this indiſputable Maxim ought to excite. One would think that Men admitted the Truth and the Force of every wiſe Saying Tradition has handed down, from the remoteſt times, in all Caſes but ſuch as

were

were applicable to themſelves. It is not to be doubted that both in Athens and Rome, there were Patriots enough to declaim againſt the Exceſſes they foreſaw would terminate in the Perdition of their reſpective Countries. Doubtleſs theſe Patriots were heard and admired. But their Exhortations produced, unhappily, no more than a fruitleſs Approbation of what they ſaid. Their Countrymen were become too much wedded to vicious Habits, to be prevailed on to relinquiſh them; and while they acknowledged they had been the Ruin of Others, they ſeemed tacitly to flatter themſelves they ſhould meet with an Exemption from the common Fate.

THE preſent Times, in England, are exactly of the ſame Complexion. We have before us the Examples of all Nations, of all Ages. We have ſufficient Warning pouring in upon us from all Quarters. We frankly acknowledge the Danger we are in, and yet, while we ſpeak of it as a Matter deſerving the ſerious Attention of all, how few are there who will refrain from ſharing, as far as they are able, in theſe pernicious Diverſions, and contributing to increaſe the common Danger. The

Truth

Truth is that what Seneca ſays of the Romans, in his days, may be ſtrikingly applied to the Engliſh, at preſent, *Mala ſua, quod Malorum ultimum eſt, amant*, they are fallen into the greateſt of Misfortunes, that of being enamoured with their own Vices.

One of the main Cauſes of the fatal Introduction of theſe foreign Amuſements, is the too frequent Viſits we pay to thoſe Parts where they chiefly flouriſh. A large Proportion of our Countrymen abroad, conſiſts of ſuch as are wholly unfit for the Purpoſes of travelling. Though they might be of ſome ſervice by ſpending their Fortunes, at home, they can do nothing, abroad, but give Foreigners a mean Opinion of the Engliſh Nation. And yet ſuch Men as theſe, are, unhappily, the Regulators of our Faſhions and Paſtimes. Having in the Courſe of their Rambles, employed their Attention chiefly on ſuch Objects, they ſet up at their Return, for Dictators in what Men of Senſe and Capacity think it unworthy of them to take the Lead.

But what is much more prejudicial to the Publick, many of theſe ſuperficial People, unable

unable to think with Judgment and Penetration of the Occurrences they meet with abroad, are apt to be charmed with that exterior Pomp of Things which prevails in ſo many other Countries: and, without conſidering whether there is any Reality under the vaſt Appearances their Eyes are feaſted with, too readily imagine that the Contempt with which the Generality of our Countrymen treat theſe Affectations of Magnificence, proceeds from Ignorance and ill-Taſte; and that, with all our Pretentions, we are neither a more reaſonable, nor a happier People than thoſe we ſo freely take upon us to undervalue.

BUT let us not be deceived with the Glare that gilds the Chains of Slavery in other Parts of the World. Let not the Shews, the Pageantries that are ſo ſolicitouſly diſplayed, on ſtated Occaſions, among theſe People, impoſe upon us. They are only calculated for the credulous and the uninformed. To the clear-ſighted they are no more than the Veil that is thrown by Tyranny over Wretchedneſs; and ſerve, at beſt, but to hide the miſerable Situation the Inhabitants are in, from their own Perceptions.

Let us not, by the ſame Rule, be brought to believe that the many Feſtivals of Gayety that reign among the Great, in thoſe Countries, are any ſubſtantial, unerring Proof that they enjoy Life in a greater Degree of Taſte and Reliſh than we do. Thoſe Oſtentations of Splendour only ſhew how little elſe they dare have to do: how much their Time is not their own, by their being obliged ſo ignominiouſly to miſpend it, in queſt of Methods to render the burden of it leſs cumberſome.

It muſt not be diſſembled that there is a Sett of Men among us, who are Advocates for theſe foreign, luxurious Amuſements, from a Notion they are of Service to ſome of the induſtrious Branches of the Community, by promoting Trade, and circulating Money among the labouring Claſſes. But when we reflect that the Appearance neceſſary to figure at theſe Amuſements, with the contingent Expences they occaſion, and above all the Spirit of Extravagance they infuſe, have plunged ſuch Numbers of People into Difficulties; when, what is ſtill worſe, we conſider that finally the Load of theſe Difficulties falls principally on ſuch as can leaſt afford to bear it,

it, the laborious Part of the Community, whoſe Complaints of Want of Payment are ſo frequent and notorious, it will be found that this Notion, which carries, at firſt Sight, ſome Degree of Plauſibility, is, on Examination, ill grounded; and that the Intereſt of Trade is not, in the End, more conſulted than the Intereſt of our Morals.

But were it even true, that ſome commercial Claſſes are, indeed, benefitted by them, is the Profit of a few Individuals to be weighed againſt the odious Conſequences that muſt enſue to the Community from ſuch Morals and Manners as theſe fatal Pleaſures would neceſſarily encourage? Is there no Felicity in Life, but what ariſes from an Increaſe of Opulence; or is it a ſufficient Ballance for all other Evils? This may be the Creed of thoſe, who, for the paltry Gratification of their Avarice, ſet up, with ſuch a bare-faced Arrogance, for the Patrons of Licentiouſneſs and Scandal. But when private Perſons ſhew themſelves ſo careleſs of what may befall the Public; or, to ſpeak more properly, are ſo ready to ſacrifice its Happineſs to their own ſelfiſh Views, the Public, in its Turn, has the fulleſt

Right to diveſt itſelf of all Concern for ſuch worthleſs Individuals; to brand them with its Execration; and to treat them as Outcaſts of Society.

AFTER having repreſented (certainly without Exaggeration) the Conſequences of a Spirit of Diſſipation, ſo truly alarming in its Nature to the whole Nation, as well in its collective, as in its individual Capacity, it remains to be ſincerely lamented, that any Man ſhould be ſo utterly abandoned in his Morals, ſo ſtrangely limited in his Conceptions, or curſt with ſuch a Levity of Heart, as to treat the greateſt Enormity this Spirit gives Birth to, rather as a Matter of Gaiety and Laughter, than as an Object demanding the moſt ſerious Reflections; ſince, whether we conſider it in a private, or a public Light, it can appear no Trifle in the Scale of ſound Reaſoning. Truth and Experience daily convince us that, however the Profligate and Diſſolute may have hoped to ſoften it by the faſhionable Appellation of Gallantry, Infidelity between Huſbands and Wives, is a Crime of ſo ſcandalous, ſo black a Die, pregnant with ſuch infinite Miſchiefs to Society, that it behoves

hoves every one to lend his Aſſiſtance in expoſing thoſe equally dangerous and ignominious Conſequences, that neceſſarily flow from the ſhameful and guilty Connivance, one may almoſt ſay Toleration, it too openly meets with in ſome Countries; where, through the moſt unaccountable Infatuation, they ſeem to have forgot that no Species of Wickedneſs ſtrikes more directly at the Root of all human Happineſs: That excluſive of its immediate Effect, the Deſtruction of domeſtic Tranquillity, and the Introduction of Anarchy and Confuſion into Families, it is the Source of the moſt irreconcileable and moſt fatal Enmities, and naturally produces the moſt dreadful Cataſtrophes in private Life; that whenever it gets Footing, and grows habitual in any Country, it breeds Diffidence and Suſpicion between Individuals, and is unqueſtionably the greateſt Obſtruction to Friendſhip, from the Fear and Jealouſy we are liable to entertain of thoſe who have conſtant Opportunities to abuſe the Privileges annexed to it: that it baniſhes all Delicacy of Sentiment, and utterly extinguiſhes that Reſpect for the Fair Sex, which is founded on the Opinion of their Honour and Virtue; of

which

which, when the Violation is no longer reputed diſgraceful among Men, it ſeldom remains an Object of Conſequence among the Women. That, in ſhort, by extirpating the moſt effectual Motive for reciprocal Attachment, it annihilates the eſſential Felicity of Love; and by extending our Deſires and Paſſions, and the hope of gratifying them, indiſcriminately to all, it eradicates the nobleſt Refinements that dignify the human Syſtems and throws all the received Ideas of civilized Nature into their primary Chaos and Confuſion.

When we ſteadfaſtly look on this Picture of the many Evils inevitably ariſing in domeſtic Life, from the Introduction of ſo heinous a Vice; when we add to them the public Calamities that have been proved muſt as neceſſarily enſue; will any Man, who wiſhes well to himſelf, acquieſce in the ſmalleſt Connivance at them? Will any Man who values himſelf on the Advantages of his Birth, Education, and Reſidence in this Country, ſee with Tranquility, or Unconcern, the Cauſes that render theſe Circumſtances advantagious to him, in danger of being irretrieveably loſt, without the moſt obſtinate Endeavours to ſave them?

Let us, for our own Sakes in particular, be wholly guiltleſs of ſo ſhameful an Acquieſcence. Let it not, for the Sake of our public Reputation, be ſaid that the Engliſh Nation, at all times ſo watchful to oppoſe whatever bore an Appearance of Enmity to its Freedom, is now ſo ſunk in Revelry and Diſſipation, ſo faſcinated by the Arts of Effeminacy, as to be totally loſt to the Senſe of its Danger.

Let it not be ſaid that what our Foes could not accompliſh by the Power of their Arms, they have at laſt compleatly effected by the Power of their Example: by the Introduction among us of thoſe contemptible Arts of throwing away and murdering Time, which it ought to be our Pride, as much as it is our Intereſt, that our Enemies ſhould always excell us in.

Let it not be ſaid, that after having born the higheſt Character among the European Nations, for thoſe Virtues that render Mankind reſpectable in a moral Light, we have loſt that ineſtimable Prize: and that the Credit and Eſteem we have ſo long, and ſo juſtly challenged,

challenged, on that account, is changed into Sneers and Contempt for having ſo wantonly, ſo criminally, given up a Preheminence that was ſo univerſally acknowledged our Due, and that procured us, througout the whole civilized World, ſo much Reverence and Renown.

Let us leave to the Italians; Let us leave to the French, the Talents of Seduction. Let us ſtill glory in Artleſſneſs and Simplicity, while they plume themſelves on their Dexterity in aſſailing and corrupting Innocence, and in all the various Intricacies of iniquitous Intercourſe. Let them, unenvied byEngliſhmen, purſue that ſhameleſs courſe of Living they ſeem, by their Practice, to conſider as their chiefeſt Happineſs. Let the Women of Italy rejoice in that ſcandalous Liberty they ſo ſteadfaſtly maintain of giving their Hands to one Man, and their Hearts to another. Let the Women of France exult in that Privilege they ſo amply exert of changing perpetually the Objects of their criminal Attachments; and glory, as it were, in the open diſplay of their Libertiniſm. Let the Men, in thoſe Countries, in conſequence of thoſe infamous Proceed-

ings,

ings, loſe themſelves in a Round of Thoughtleſſneſs, and become callous to thoſe Feelings of the Heart and Mind that relate to any Subject wherein Pleaſure has not the principal Preponderance. Let their Attention be taken up with a Fondneſs for, and an Admiration of, thoſe Refinements, which, while they prove a Source of fruitleſs, inglorious Entertainment, never fail to debilitate the nobler Faculties, and to create a Forgetfulneſs of the more important Functions that ought to employ an Individual who wiſhes and pretends to be ranked above the Vulgar.

But never let this Contagion reach our Country. Let us remember the Figure we lately made in the Eyes of the Univerſe. Let us ponder on the Means by which this Figure was, and is to be, maintained. Let us inceſſantly revolve in our Minds, that a People who means to diſtinguiſh themſelves, from all others, by the Freedom and Excellence of their Conſtitution, by their Proſperity at home, by their Glory abroad, muſt alſo reſolve to diſtinguiſh themſelves no leſs by thoſe Virtues though which theſe Trophies are obtained. The Field of Honour, whether in

the purſuit of Improvements in our own Country, or in the Search of further Materials for Welfare and Reputation in other Parts, admits of very little Room for Vacancy and Leiſure. Indefatigable Labour and Application are the Price we muſt pay for ſolid Grandeur; and it is Treaſon to the Public to make theſe Qualities ſubſervient to meer Amuſement.

Rouzed by the Conſideration of what we owe to ourſelves, and by the Importance of thoſe Warnings we behold in the Fate of our Neighbours, ought we not to unite all our Efforts, in order to give an effectual Check to that equally rapid and audacious Progreſs of Revelry and Diſſipation, that is indiſputably pregnant with ſuch numerous, ſuch terrible Miſchiefs? Is it poſſible that a ſenſible, ſagacious People can remain ſo paſſive, ſo ſupine, when the Conſequences of the preſent daily increaſing Paſſion for pernicious Pleaſures, are ſo obvious to all who will not refuſe to open their Eyes to Conviction?

Is it reaſonable to imagine that thoſe flagitious Proceedings which now engroſs the Attention

Attention and Converſation of the Times, will be long confined to a few, while the Temptations that occaſioned theſe few to fall, are ſtill held out to the many? Such Hopes were abſurd. They are out of the nature of things. Theſe Proceedings will not even be confined to thoſe Claſſes among which they firſt began. Examples are too powerful Incentives to be ſlighted among the Little, when once they have been diffuſively adopted among the Great: and the bad have invariably been found irreſiſtably contagious, when ſuffered to operate without the moſt immediate and moſt vigorious Oppoſition.

ANIMATED by theſe cogent Motives; by the Deſire of preſerving domeſtic Peace, Reputation and Happineſs within our Families; by the Attachment we all profeſs for our Country, and its excellent Conſtitution; by all the Ties, in ſhort, of Intereſt, Religion and Policy, let us reſolutely determine to ſtrike home at the Cauſes of all theſe Evils, that ſo forcibly, ſo openly threaten Deſtruction to whatever we hold moſt dear in public, as well as private Life.

FINIS.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS many Accounts have been given of, and Remarks and Obſervations made upon, the French Nation, under Titles either exactly the ſame, or ſo nearly ſimilar, that one Book of this kind has been frequently miſtaken and ſold for another, it may not be unneceſſary to inform the Publick, that the Work entitled *An Account of the Character and Manners of the French, with occaſional Obſervations on the Engliſh*, written by the Auther of this Pamphlet, is to be had of the ſame Bookſellers E. and C. Dilly in the Poultry, J. Walter at Charing Croſs and J. Robſon, New Bond Street; and is allowed to give the Reader the trueſt and compleateſt Idea of the real Character and Manners of our natural and conſtant Rivals, with which for obvious reaſons, it behoves every Engliſh Gentleman to make himſelf critically acquainted, that was ever yet offered to the Publick. The following ſhort Extracts are taken from

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from the Opinion given of it by the CRITICAL REVIEWERS.

" We have read this Performance with great Attention and with equal Pleaſure. It ſeems to be written by a Man diveſted of all ridiculous, national Prejudices, one of a philoſophical turn of Mind and accuſtomed to deep Reflection. One Peculiarity attending this Author is his great Modeſty, for we hardly remember that, through the whole work, he ſpeaks above once or twice in the firſt perſon. Of courſe, we have none of his own trivial unimportant Adventures, ſo frequent in Writers who treat of the Characters and Manners of Nations amongſt whom they have ſojourned; which, however conſequential in their own Opinion, can ſeldom be intereſting to the Reader. In a word, he ſeems to be a Perſon who has lived long both among the French and Engliſh, a prying but unconcerned obſerver; a character rare in the world, but the moſt to be depended on both for Facts and Opinions."

" IT would far exceed the bounds of a Review to give a detail of all the Subjects handled

led by this judicious and philoſophical Writer; beſides it would be doing him a ſort of Injuſtice as his own Reflections are frequently the moſt valuable. All we can therefore do is to ſelect thoſe Paſſages, where either the Facts from their Curioſity may be moſt acceptable to the Engliſh Reader, or the Reflections, from their Juſtneſs and Solidity, may be moſt beneficial to him."

"The Behaviour of the French in the conjugal State is too well known to be inſiſted on here: but our Author's Remarks on it doing him great honour, both as a Lover of Virtue and of Liberty, and imagining they may be particularly ſerviceable at this Period, when there ſeems from ſome late remarkable Adventures, to be a Diſpoſition among ourſelves to run into the ſame abandoned Libertiniſm, the ſure Fore-runner of Slavery, we ſhall conclude this Article with inſerting them, &c. &c. &c."